

Washington, DC – U.S. Congressmen Ciro D. Rodriguez (TX-23) and Silvestre Reyes (TX-16) announced a \$231,499 grant for the El Paso County Sheriff's Department from the Justice Department's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Secure Our Schools grant program.

The grant will fund school safety programs. According to Justice Department officials, funding may be used for things such as placement and use of metal detectors; locks, lighting, and other deterrent measures; security assessments; security training of personnel and students; coordination with local law enforcement; and any other measure that may provide a significant increase in security.

"A good education is vital to the success of our children, but they can't learn if their environment isn't safe," said Congressman Rodriguez. "This grant will fund measures to keep our young people safe and let them focus on learning."

Congressman Reyes added: "This funding is coming at a critical time for the County, as it wrestles with difficult budget cuts to address a large deficit," Congressman Reyes said.

"This funding will help the Sheriff's Department to partner with schools to ensure the continued safety of students and teachers in our region."

Nearly \$16 million in Secure Our Schools grants were granted to 128 law enforcement agencies in 38 states. SOS grants provide funding to state, local, or tribal governments to assist with the procurement of school safety resources and the opportunity to establish and enhance a variety of school safety equipment and/or programs. Each SOS grant is two years in duration, and provides a maximum federal share of \$500,000.

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